



## CITY OF LODI

## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Presentation of Proclamation - "Prevent a Litter Month"

MEETING DATE: March 20, 1991

PREPARED BY: City Clerk

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That Mayor Hinchman present a proclamation proclaiming April as "Prevent a Litter Month".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The City of Lodi has been requested to present a proclamation proclaiming April as "Prevent a Litter Month". A proclamation has been prepared and will be received by a representative of the organization requesting the proclamation.

FUNDING: None required.

*Alice M. Reimche*  
Alice M. Reimche  
City Clerk

AMR/jmp

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

THOMAS A. PETERSON  
City Manager



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COUNCOM9/TXTA.02J/COUNCOM



Valley Animal Rights Alliance  
P.O. Box 2314  
Lodi, CA 95241

March 13, 1991

Mayor David M. Hinchman,

Thank you for your willingness to declare April as "Prevent A Litter" month in Lodi. We all know that dogs and cats bring us a lot of Joy. But we also have too much of a good thing. The sad fact is that there are just too many companion animals and not enough homes for them all. Last year at the Lodi animal shelter, 523 dogs and puppies were killed, while 1276 cats and kittens were also destroyed. At Stockton Animal Control, which ends up with many of Lodi's animals, the figures are even more appalling; 6,707 dogs/puppies and 6,345 cats/kittens were destroyed due to lack of human responsibility.

I'm sure you agree that pet overpopulation is a real problem, but it's also one we can all help solve. By encouraging people to be responsible pet owners, not allowing animals to run loose and having their companion animals spayed or neutered, we can prevent the proliferation of more unwanted animals; animals for which all taxpayers pay: to round up, shelter and eventually destroy.

By making public the attached resolution with the support of the government of Lodi, you will be encouraging responsible citizenship, as well as saving thousands of animals from the undeserved fate of being homeless and unwanted.

Thank you for your attention to a very important issue of both human and animal welfare. Should you need further information, please feel free to contact us.

With best regards,

*Rose Hilliard*      *Kim Miller*  
Rose Hilliard & Kim Miller  
Executive Directors  
Valley Animal Rights Alliance

Suggested "Prevent A Litter" Month Resolution

Resolution provided by The Humane Society of The United States.

To designate April as Lodi "Prevent A Litter" Month.

**Whereas** the irresponsibility of some dog and cat owners in allowing uncontrolled breeding of their pets has created a pet overpopulation problem in Lodi;

**Whereas** the pet-overpopulation problem results in the destruction of thousands of dogs, cats, puppies and kittens each year;

**Whereas** the pet-overpopulation problem results in other cruelties to pets caused by neglect, such as abandonment, starvation, and injury;

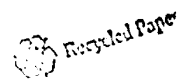
**Whereas** the cruelties inflicted on pets result not only in lost animal lives, but also in lost resources spent in our community to collect and shelter neglected and displaced pets;

**Whereas** the pet-overpopulation problem can be solved only by the active promotion of a pet owner responsibility program that includes spaying and neutering of pets, proper care and sheltering of pets, and compliance with animal-control regulations; and

**Whereas** the people of Lodi should commit themselves to preventing the needless destruction of pets by practicing responsible pet ownership and by spaying and neutering pets as the means of ending the problem of pet overpopulation;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Mayor that April is designated as Lodi "Prevent A Litter" Month as a statement of affirmation to prevent the needless suffering and destruction of our community's pets.





THERE AREN'T  
ENOUGH  
HOMES  
FOR  
THEM  
ALL...

**PREVENT A LITTER.**  
***SPAY OR NEUTER YOUR PET.***



The Humane Society of the United States  
Washington, DC 20037



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

**PREVENT A LITTER**

## WHEN THERE'S JUST TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING...

there's a problem. In the case of dogs and cats, it's a problem of pet overpopulation. Each year, more than twelve million dogs and cats, puppies and kittens, are turned in to animal shelters around the country. Some are lost, some are abandoned, some are unwanted, most are the result of irresponsible ownership and uncontrolled breeding. Sadly, nearly eight million of those animals have to be euthanatized because there aren't enough good homes for all of them.

## PET OVERPOPULATION IS A PROBLEM YOU CAN HELP SOLVE...

by being a responsible pet owner, as well as a caring and concerned citizen. Here are some of the things you can do:

- Prevent a litter by having your pet spayed or neutered.
- Don't let your pet run loose. Keeping your pet at home can help prevent unwanted breeding and protect your pet from getting lost or stolen.
- Spread the "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" message to friends, family, neighbors, organizations, and so on. People must become aware of the problem before they can be expected to help with the solutions. (For more information about other "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" materials that can help educate others, write to The HSUS at the address on the back of this brochure.)

## PREVENT A LITTER—IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR PET

- Spayed and neutered dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives.
- Spaying female dogs and cats eliminates the possibility of uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the incidence of breast cancer.

- Neutering male dogs and cats reduces the incidence of prostate cancer.
- Neutered animals are less likely to roam and fight.

## PREVENT A LITTER—IT'S GOOD FOR YOU

- Spayed and neutered pets are better, more affectionate companions.
- Neutered cats are less likely to spray and mark territory.
- Spaying a female dog or cat eliminates its heat cycle, which can last twenty-one days, twice a year, in dogs, and anywhere from three to fifteen days, three or more times a year, in cats. Females in heat often cry incessantly, show nervous behavior, and attract unwanted male animals.
- Spayed and neutered pets are less likely to bite. Unaltered animals often exhibit more behavior and temperament problems than those that have been spayed or neutered.

## PREVENT A LITTER—IT'S GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY

Communities spend millions of dollars to control and eliminate unwanted animals. Irresponsible breeding contributes to the problem of dog bites and attacks. Animal shelters are overburdened with surplus animals. Some communities have developed and implemented good programs that work to promote pet sterilization and responsible pet ownership. Such programs may include low-cost spay/neuter options, higher license fees for unaltered animals, and public education. In Los Angeles, one such program reduced the numbers of cats and dogs handled by city animal shelters from 145,000 to 81,000 in just ten years.

## SPAY AND NEUTER: EXCUSES, MYTHS...AND THE FACTS

"My pet will get fat and lazy." The truth is that pets get fat and lazy if their owners feed them too much and don't give them enough exercise.

"It's better to have one litter first." There is no medical evidence that having a litter is good for your pet. In fact, the evidence indicates that females spayed before their first heat, at about six months, are healthier. Males can be neutered from about six months on. It's a good idea to check with your veterinarian about your own animals.

"But my pet is a purebred." So are at least one-fourth of the animals brought to animal shelters around the country. There are just too many dogs and cats—mixed breed *and* purebred.

"I'll find good homes for all the puppies and kittens." The fact that shelters have to euthanatize about 80 percent of the animals they take in indicates that there are not enough homes to go around. Even if you could find homes for the litter your pet produces, those are homes that will no longer be available for any of the millions of animals already born.

"I want my dog to be protective." Spaying or neutering does not affect a dog's natural instincts to protect its home and family.

"My children should experience the miracle of birth." Even if your children are able to see your pet give birth—which is unlikely, since it usually occurs at night and in seclusion—the lesson you will really be teaching is that animals can be created and discarded as it suits us. Instead, you should explain to your children that the real miracle is life and that preventing births of some pets can save the lives of others.

"But my dog (or cat) is so special, I want a pup (or kitten) just like her." Your dog or cat may be a great pet. But that doesn't mean you'll get a carbon copy. Professional animal breeders who follow generations of bloodlines can't guarantee they will get just what they want out of a particular litter. Your chances are even slimmer. In fact, you could get an entire litter of puppies or kittens with all of your pet's (and its mate's) worst characteristics.

"It's too expensive to have my pet spayed or neutered." The cost for spaying and neutering depends on the sex of the animal, its size and age, your veterinarian's fees, and a number of other variables. Some communities have low-cost options, and some veterinarians offer discounts for special circumstances. But whatever the actual price, spay or neuter surgery is a one-time cost and relatively small when compared to all the benefits. It's also a small price to pay for the health of your pet and to prevent more unwanted animals.

## HOW YOU CAN "Be a P.A.L." TO YOUR PET

- **Prevent A Litter.** Spay or neuter your pet.
- **Provide A Leash.** Don't allow your dog to run loose and keep your cat inside.
- **Purchase A License.** If your pet does get lost, identification can be its ticket home.
- **Pet A Lot.** Your pet needs *you*. Of course, you must provide good food, water, shelter, and veterinary care—but that's not enough. Your dog or cat needs your affection, your attention, your time, and your companionship.

If you're thinking about adding a pet to your family, make sure you've thought about all the responsibilities as well as the benefits, then visit your local animal shelter. There are millions of dogs and cats out there, just waiting for a pal like you.

## ANOTHER WAY YOU CAN HELP

If you're not already a member of The Humane Society of the United States, please consider joining. Your \$10.00 annual membership fee is tax-deductible (to the extent allowed by law) and will allow us to help more animals. For more information, write to:

The Humane Society of the United States  
2100 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

*On the cover: Television personality Willard Scott urges everyone to "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter." (Peter Garfield photo)*

Valley Animal Rights Alliance  
P.O. Box 2214 - Lodi, CA 95241



The Humane Society of the United States  
2100 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

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## IS THE PROBLEM OF PET OVER-POPULATION SERIOUS?

**YES,** very serious. In the United States, more than 70,000 puppies and kittens are born each day due to the uncontrolled breeding of pets. Add the offspring of stray and abandoned animals to that number and the total becomes even more staggering. When these figures are compared to the 10,000 humans born daily in the United States, it becomes obvious that there can never be enough homes for so many animals. In fact, for every contented animal in this country, another four pets live out their lives hungry, cold, and at the mercy of humans. As for those dogs and cats that end up in America's shelters, an estimated 7.5 million are destroyed each year because they are not wanted by anyone, anywhere.

## ARE THERE OTHER CONCERNS BESIDES JUST TOO MANY PETS?

**YES** is the most obvious consequence of uncontrolled breeding, however, there are other equally tragic problems that result from pet overpopulation. The transformation of some of America's shelters into "warehouses" or cheap sources of animals for use in bio-medical experimentation, the acceptance of cruelty to animals as a way of life in our society, and the stress that caring shelter workers suffer as they are forced to kill one animal after another are just a few of the consequences of society's carelessness. Today, living creatures have become "throwaway" items to be cuddled when cute and abandoned when they become inconvenient. Such disregard for animal life is pervading and eroding our culture.

Abandoned and stray animals that survive in city streets, alleys, and warehouses also pose a health threat to humans and to other pet animals. Stray pets and homeless animals get into trash containers, defecate in public areas or on private lawns, and anger citizens who have no understanding of their misery or needs. Some stray animals scare away desired wildlife—such as birds—or terrify small children.

The growing number of dog bites is also due in part to uncontrolled breeding of pets. Bites by so-called vicious dogs have spurred an enormous amount of media attention recently, and fatalities by dangerous dogs are a reality. According to HSUS Director of Higher Education Dr. Randall Lockwood, there appears to be a much greater incidence of biting in unaltered animals. "Of more than twenty fatalities investigated over the last two years," says Dr. Lockwood, "we have found that none was caused by spayed or neutered dogs."

Also, viciousness in dog breeds can often be attributed to irresponsible breeding without regard for temperament. Halting reproduction will both benefit the breed and protect the human population. Each year, communities are forced to spend millions of taxpayers' dollars trying to cope with the problems that pet overpopulation causes.

## CAN SUCH A HUGE PROBLEM BE SOLVED?

**YES.** Only by implementing widespread sterilization programs, only by spaying and neutering *all* pets, will we get a handle on this problem. Consider the fact that, in six short years, one female dog and her offspring can be the source of 67,000 puppies, while in seven years, one cat and her young can produce 420,000 cats. With such high reproductive rates, it stands to reason that, when carefully planned and implemented, sterilization programs can produce a dramatic reduction in the numbers of unwanted animals being born in only a few years. In fact, in towns and cities that have implemented such programs, we've already seen declines in numbers of animals being euthanatized by 30 to 60 percent! For example, before the first three of Los Angeles' spay/neuter clinics were opened in 1971, approximately 145,000 animals were handled at the animal shelter. Ten years later, the number had dropped to 81,000. Equally successful programs have been implemented in other parts of the country. Only through the establishment of such programs nationwide will we begin to see an end to the tragedy of pet overpopulation.

## ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF PET OVERPOPULATION?

**YES.** Legislation can have the most direct impact on this problem by requiring that every pet adopted from municipal and county shelters be sterilized within a certain period of time.

Similarly, differential licensing laws—laws that substantially increase license fees for pets that have not been spayed or neutered—provide owners with an incentive to sterilize their animals. Education, too, is an essential part of solving this problem. Unless people know the facts about pet overpopulation and sterilization, they are virtually helpless to do anything about them.

Reduced spay/neuter fees play an important role in solving this problem, as well. Low-cost spay/neuter clinics in some communities have already helped bring down the cost of sterilization, and, in areas where veterinarians have agreed to reduce their spay/neuter fees, we've seen a significant decline in the numbers of animals being euthanatized.

## IS IT ALL RIGHT TO BREED MY PET IF I FIND GOOD HOMES FOR ALL THE OFFSPRING?

**NO.** Each time you place one of your pet's puppies or kittens in a loving home, there is one fewer potential home for another animal. There are *already* more than enough animals for every potential home, and, each day, tens of thousands of dogs and cats are destroyed because no one wants them. If someone you know wants a puppy or kitten, urge him or her to adopt one from a local shelter, thus saving it from a tragic fate.

## WON'T MY PET BECOME FAT AND LAZY ONCE IT IS STERILIZED?

**NO.** Your pet will actually benefit from spaying or neutering because it will lead a healthier, longer life. Spaying a female eliminates the



possibility of its developing uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the chances of breast cancer. Neutering a male reduces incidence of prostate enlargement and prostate cancer later in life and will make your pet more affectionate and less likely to roam, get in fights, or become lost. Pets become fat and lazy as a result of overeating and lack of exercise, not from spaying or neutering.

### IF MY PET IS STERILIZED, DOES THAT MAKE ME A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER?

**YES,** it certainly helps. Sterilization is an important part of being a responsible owner, but responsible pet ownership also means providing adequate food, water, and proper veterinary care; obeying the leash and licensing laws in your community; and giving your pet the love, companionship, exercise, and attention it needs.

### CAN I "Be a P.A.L."?

**YES.** To "Be a P.A.L.," prevent a litter and be a responsible pet owner. This is the single most important step you can take. Have your own pet spayed or neutered to make sure it does not contribute to the pet-overpopulation problem. Next, spread the word in your community that the pet-overpopulation problem is crucial—that it must be solved and *can* be solved. Work to ensure that all animals have homes, adequate food and water, proper medical care, and love. Urge your legislators to pass mandatory spay/neuter and differential licensing laws. Also, talk to local civic groups, schools, and neighborhood associations about this shameful waste of animal life and enlist their support in your efforts. Because April has been declared HSUS "Prevent A Litter" Month, be sure to use this as a time to focus your community's attention on this devastating problem. For more information on how you can educate the public about the pet-overpopulation problem in your community, send \$5.00 for the HSUS "Be a P.A.L.—Prevent A Litter" packet if you do not already have it.



# SPAYING & NEUTERING

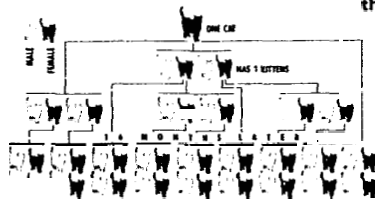


PETA

Domesticated cats and dogs have been popular human companions for thousands of years, but society's failure to responsibly control their reproduction has resulted in an overpopulation that causes millions of them to be abandoned and killed every year.



Approximately 2,500 kittens and puppies are born each hour in the United States.



Animal shelters can adopt out only a fraction of the animals they receive, and the rest — about 17 million a year — are put to death, usually by painless injection but sometimes by such inhumane methods as shooting, decapitation chambers or electrocution. Animals in shelters may also be given or sold to laboratories where the law allows or requires pound seizure.

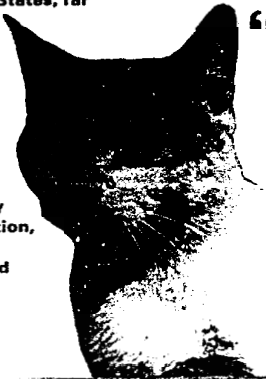


### What does spaying and neutering involve?

Spaying or neutering is surgical sterilization. Spaying of females involves the removal of the uterus and the ovaries, and usually requires an overnight stay at the veterinarian's office. Neutering of males is done by removing the testicles, and often the animal can go home the same day. Responsible animal shelters require those who adopt animals to spay or neuter them, and some veterinarians and humane societies offer low-cost spaying and neutering services to encourage sterilization. Spaying and neutering makes animals less likely to roam or fight, and helps prevent mammary and testicular cancer.

### How many homeless animals are there?

Approximately 2,500 kittens and puppies are born every hour in the United States, far more than can ever find good homes. Unwanted animals are dumped at the local pound or abandoned in woods and on city streets, where they suffer from starvation, lack of shelter and veterinary care, and abuse by cruel people.



**"I WOULD NOT GIVE MUCH FOR THAT MAN'S RELIGION WHOSE CAT AND DOG ARE NOT THE BETTER FOR IT."**

Abraham Lincoln



## How can overpopulation be reversed?

Animal owners can help their companion animals by sterilizing and refusing to support the commercial breeding of cats and dogs, which has resulted in respiratory problems, dysplasia, back spines, and other health problems. It is an immoral purpose to breed even one animal when so many are already homeless. Those who are particularly concerned about animal welfare should consider sterilizing their own animals.



## What is PETA?

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is a national nonprofit animal protection organization dedicated to establishing and defending the rights of all species. PETA works through public education, research and investigations, legislation, special events, direct action and grassroots organizing. With more than a quarter of a million members, PETA operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear or experiment on.



**PETA**

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS  
PO Box 42516, Washington, DC 20015-0516  
☎ (301) 770-7444

### MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM

Enclosed is my contribution to go toward your vital work on behalf of all animals.

☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(annual membership is \$15)

☐ I'm already a PETA member. This is an extra donation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Send the completed form with your check to:  
PETA, P.O. Box 42516, Washington DC 20015-0516



Thank you from all of us at PETA.

Valley Animal Rights Alliance  
P.O. Box 2314 Lodi, CA 95241

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